

**LODI CITY COUNCIL  
SHIRTSLEEVE SESSION  
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2009**

A. Roll Call by City Clerk

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, October 27, 2009, commencing at 7:04 a.m.

Present: Council Member Hitchcock, Council Member Johnson, Mayor Pro Tempore Katzakian, Council Member Mounce, and Mayor Hansen

Absent: None

Also Present: City Manager King, City Attorney Schwabauer, and City Clerk Johl

B. Topic(s)

B-1 Report on Downtown Summit

City Manager King introduced the subject matter of the Downtown Summit report and provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the same. Specific topics of discussion included why have a downtown summit, the format of the event, where we want to be, recognition for downtown Lodi, what now, survey results, positives, needs, results applicable to visitor and business/property owners, ranking of priorities for business/property owners, leading barriers to financial success, needs to make a more friendly/vibrant downtown, Sacramento Street targeted for development, downtown needs for visitors, safety results, discussion group findings, priorities identified by a single group, and the next steps.

Michael Freedman provided a brief presentation and specifically discussed the progress that has been made in downtown since the first efforts were made, consumer preferences over the last decade, market forces taking place, downtown needs as they have progressed over the years, appearance and cleanliness of downtown, businesses to stay open on Sundays, and the overall need to focus on the most effective and highly desired items versus everything at once.

In response to Mayor Hansen, Mr. Freedman stated education is the key when it comes to solving parking challenges in that the active core of merchants need to understand for themselves the value associated with available parking spaces in front of their businesses. Mr. Freedman stated positive enforcement is preferred and for those merchants that choose not to participate a more aggressive parking enforcement mechanism may be needed.

In response to Mayor Hansen, Mr. Freedman stated economic development programs run by the City Manager's office are always more effective in light of the knowledge base and the enthusiasm from the City Manager himself.

In response to Council Member Hitchcock, Mr. Freedman stated the top things on the priority list for downtown revitalization could include high quality restaurants on School Street, selecting a property for a daytime anchor, getting that property ready, and working on national retailers.

In response to Council Member Hitchcock, Mr. King stated one way to work with property owners is to provide financial incentives such as what Mountain View did on Castro Street with the parking options and incentives.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Mr. Freedman stated the retail, entertainment, and activity uses should be concentrated on School Street, with a condominium focus on Sacramento

Street and Church Street in light of the commuter rail efforts and the housing market return over the next few years.

A brief discussion ensued among Council Member Mounce and Mr. King regarding the use of Art in Public Places funding and efforts, along with the Winegrape Commission and the Conference and Visitors Bureau, for directional signs to encourage downtown tourism in conjunction with the wine industry.

In response to Mayor Hansen, Mr. King stated there was general consensus among the groups at the summit that there should be an anchor and specialty shops.

In response to Council Member Hitchcock, Mr. King provided a brief overview of what a possible business improvement district could look like and specifically discussed current assessments through business licensing and property taxes, a governing board of directors, assessments paid based on proportionality, all property owners assessed without exception, and the preliminary idea coming from the business community with the City working with property owners and businesses to facilitate the district.

In response to Mayor Hansen, Mr. King stated he is not aware of any kiosk-related discussions that came up during the summit.

Phil Pennino spoke in favor of downtown revitalization efforts and specifically discussed the synergy among the property owners to move forward, efforts being made toward downtown appearance and cleanliness, facilitating groups coming together, the need to revisit parking issues, attracting a downtown anchor, possible housing efforts, lodging in downtown, and the creation of a business improvement district.

In response to Myrna Wetzel's question regarding out of town landlords, Mr. King stated the issue is more of any property owner being motivated enough to invest in the community when they are currently receiving an adequate return on their investment.

C. Comments by Public on Non-Agenda Items

None.

D. Adjournment

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

ATTEST:

Randi Johl  
City Clerk



## CITY OF LODI COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

**AGENDA TITLE:** Report on Downtown Summit

**MEETING DATE:** October 27, 2009

**PREPARED BY:** City Manager

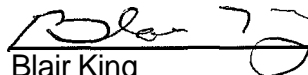
---

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** Downtown Lodi last year received recognition from a respected planning organization as one of the best small-city downtowns in the Central Valley. Now, 12 years after the completion of Downtown's major capital improvements, it was time for a self-assessment. Is Downtown good enough? Can it get better?

Those questions led to the Downtown Summit the morning of October 16 at Hutchins Street Square. Although downtown business and property owners were directly solicited to attend, the event was open to the public. Some 70 community members gathered to hear three outside experts' perspectives, digest results of a survey of business/property owners as well as Downtown visitors, and discuss ways to improve the business district.

Attendees first heard brief presentations from local business organizations before the featured speakers: Michael Freedman, the architect behind the Downtown improvements; Simon Andrews, an expert in directional signs; and Marco Li Mandri, a business district organizer. Following their presentations, the audience was divided into five discussions groups, with each asked to identify five priorities for improving Downtown. Many participants stayed after the summit's 11:30 a.m. conclusion to ask further questions of our guest speakers. Many attendees left the Summit re-energized with a newly focused vision of what Downtown could be.

The consensus of the discussion groups will be presented to the City Council, along with possible ways to accomplish those goals. In addition, Mr. Freedman is scheduled to be available to answer questions.

  
Blair King  
City Manager

---

APPROVED:   
Blair King, City Manager

# Report on Downtown Summit

October 27, 2009



# I) Why a Downtown Summit?

After a decade of downtown revitalization efforts, gather parties together to review progress, look at the future, and answer the question, "Have we reached a plateau?"

# I) Why a Downtown Summit?

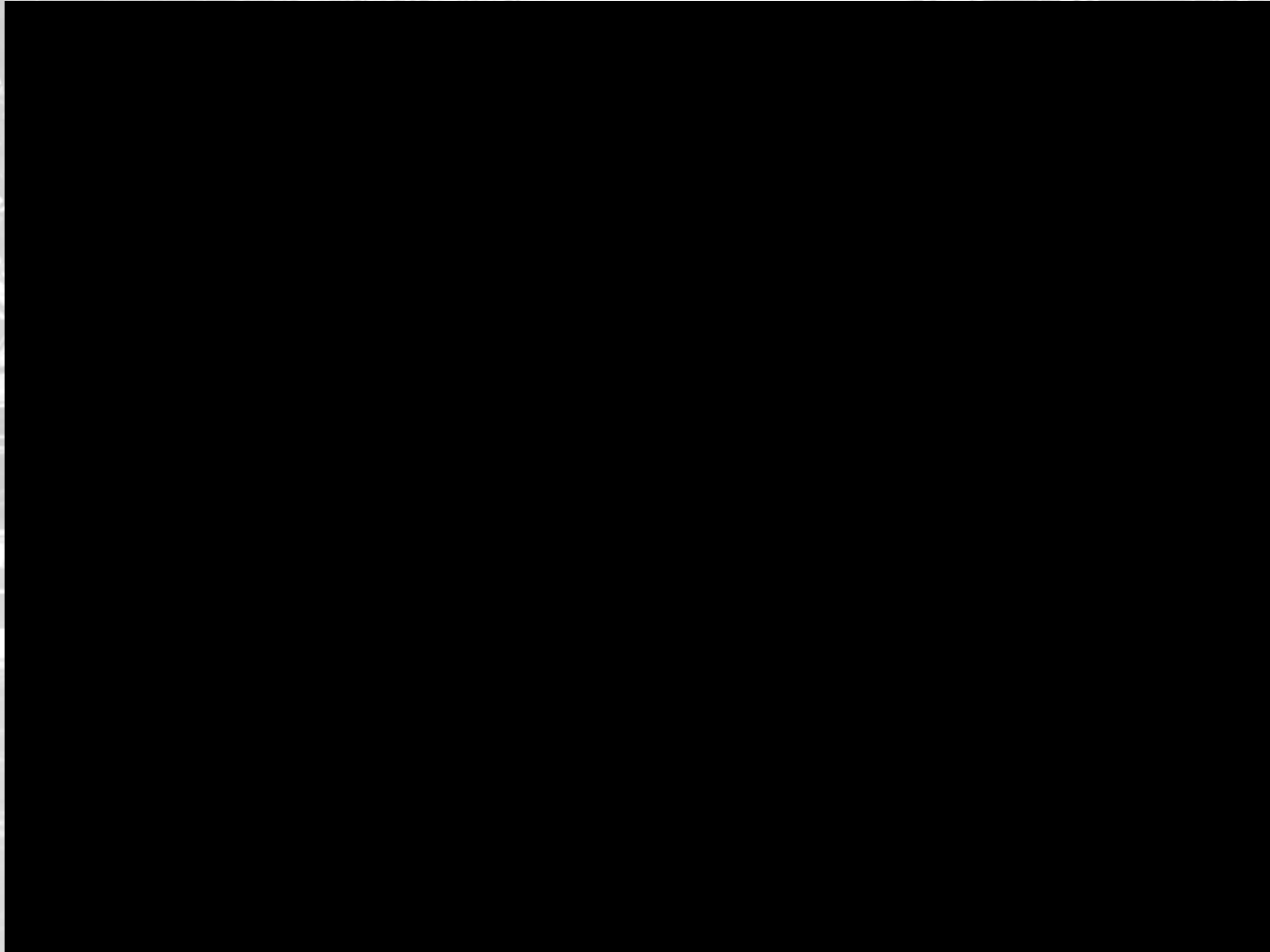
What we hoped the event would do:

- Reinforce that Downtown is still a priority
- Attract business attention to Downtown
- Energize owners and merchants
- Continue the conversation on the evolution of Downtown

# II) The Format

- Pre-surveys
  - Surveyed business/property owners
  - Surveyed “visitors”
- Brief comments from DLBP, Visit Lodi, Chamber of Commerce
- Speakers
  - Michael Freedman
  - Simon Andrews
  - Marco Li Mandri
- Group Sessions

# Is this where we want to be?





# Recognition for Downtown Lodi

- Considered a “success story” of downtown revitalization by representatives of other cities
- In 2008, named one of best three small-city downtowns in the Central Valley by the California Planning and Development Report



# So ... what now?

- Where are we now?
- Where are we going?
- Where should we be going?



# Survey

- Surveys mailed to business and property owners, more than 60 responses (+20% returned)
- Total of 50 visitors surveyed on three occasions



# Survey results

## **Positives**

- Generally positive view of Downtown
- Identity linked to theater, restaurants, farmers market and events
- Visitors reported overwhelmingly they felt very safe Downtown



# Survey results

## Needs

- Parking
- More specialty shops/museums
- Restaurants
- Increased promotions/marketing





# Survey results

**Important to visitors, less so for  
business/property owners**

- Businesses open on Sundays



# Survey results

## **Important to business/property owners, less so for visitors**

- Cleaner Downtown
- More promotions/marketing



# Survey results

## **Business/property owners rank:**

Downtown characteristics, from excellent to poor:

- 1) Ease of circulation
- 2) Personal safety
- 3) Visual identity
- 4) Cleanliness
- 5) Variety of restaurants, entertainment
- 6) Affordable rental space





# Survey results

## **Business/property owner rank (cont.):**

- 7) Maintenance and landscaping
- 8) Likelihood of financial success
- 9) Quality of promotions and marketing
- 10) Shopping opportunities
- 11) Availability of parking



# Survey results

## **Business/property owners say these are the leading barriers to financial success:**

- Empty storefronts
- Homeless and transients
- Access to investment capital
- Lack of parking
- Building code/ADA compliance



# Survey results

## **They say these will make Downtown more friendly/vibrant:**

- More specialty shops/museums
- More parking
- More restaurants
- More promotions/marketing
- Cleaner Downtown

## **Least important:**

- Businesses open on Sundays



# Survey results

**What area should be targeted for development?**

**Sacramento Street**



# Survey results

## **Visitors say Downtown needs:**

- More restaurants
- More specialty shops/museums
- More parking

## **Least important:**

- Cleaner Downtown





# Survey results

## **Why are visitors here?**

- Dine at a restaurant
- Go to a movie
- Attend a special event
- Farmers market
- Visit a specialty shop



# Survey results

## **Visitors feel very safe**

- 47 of 50 respondents felt “very safe” during the day
- 43 of 50 felt either “somewhat safe” or “very safe” at night



# III) What was achieved?

## Discussion group findings

- 5 of 5 determined a directional sign program was a priority
- 4 of 5 felt property owners should participate in a Business Improvement District (3 saying as joint effort with business owners)
- 3 of 5 said extend regional marketing efforts
- 3 of 5 said recruit more retail, specialty stores
- 2 of 5 said recruit a Downtown “anchor”
- 2 of 5 favor Redevelopment Agency assistance
- 2 of 5 said pursue development of Elm/School street



# III) What was achieved?

## Other priorities identified by single group

- More public art
- Clean sidewalks, update downtown furniture
- Facilitate with City economic development position
- Develop mixed-use buildings
- Pursue Downtown hotel

# IV) Where do we go from here?

- Presentation at regular City Council meeting
- Council feedback
- Customer service issues
- Signs
- Zoning issues – Planning
- Marketing
- Implementation tools